



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232-4181

In Reply Refer to:
FWS/MBSP

March 26, 2008

Dear Interested Party:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) are working on a proposed project that requires a review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The joint project involves habitat enhancement for deer and elk on approximately 4,000 acres over a five-year period on Sherman Creek Wildlife Area in Ferry County, Washington. Objectives of the project include: opening forest stands to increase deer and elk forage production through mechanical thinning and prescribed fire, reducing fuel loading, improving stand health, and returning fire to this ecosystem on a periodic basis. More frequent fire will help return the plant community to more open stands with fire tolerant species. Program income (revenue) generated from the thinning project will be used to acquire perpetual timber rights (PTRs) on Oak Creek and L. T. Murray/Wenas Wildlife Areas in Kittitas and Yakima Counties, Washington.

We have included a CD containing several documents for your review and comment: a SEPA Checklist, a Determination of Non-significance (DNS) issued by WDFW, a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) issued by the Service, and this cover letter. These documents also are available electronically on the WDFW SEPA page: <http://wdfw.wq.gov/hab/sepa/sepa.htm>. You also can request hard-copies by contacting either WDFW or the USFWS at the telephone numbers provided below.

Comments on the DNS will be accepted for a period of 14 days ending on April 11, 2008. There is a 30-day comment period for the Draft (EA) that ends on April 28, 2008. Please send your hard-copy comments to SEPAdesk, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, 600 Capital Way North, Olympia, WA 98501. Comments can be submitted electronically at SEPAdesk@dfw.wa.gov.



WDFW and the USFWS will consider your comments and incorporate them into the final SEPA and NEPA documents before making final decisions. Those who have submitted comments will be notified of the final decisions. Please contact Jennifer Quan, WDFW, Habitat Program Manager (360-902-2508) or Dan Edwards, USFWS, Wildlife Branch Chief (503-231-2261), if you have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris McKay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chris McKay
Assistant Regional Director
Migratory Birds and State Programs

